

APPROVED NOVEMBER 28, 2017

Montgomery County Community Action Board
October 24, 2017
1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3306, Rockville, MD 20852

MINUTES

CAB Members – Present: Isaac Osei Asare, Mary Bennett, Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Lisa Conlon, Jackie Dennard, Gail Gunod-Green, Ron Jennings, Tiffany Jones, Agnes Leshner, Pamela Luckett, Steve Ruffin, Mike Subin, and Zelda Wafer-Alonge

CAB Members Absent: Alejandro Becerra, Stacy Coletta, Laura Irwin, and Juliette Traore

Guests: Erica Bentley, Gwen Crider, Sebastian Hand (MCPS), Ebonee Hawkins (Howard University Social Work student interning with Head Start), Erika Jackson (MCPS), Meg Shumacher (MCPS)

Staff: Aizat Oladapo, Sharon Strauss, and Leah Goldfine

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

Consent Agenda: Mike moved to approve the consent agenda and Agnes seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The consent agenda included the September 26, 2017 CAB meeting minutes; September CAB meeting evaluation results; Executive Director's report; Head Start report, including credit card statement, grant update, FY18 monitoring letter, and Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol; CAA contracts/partners report; CAI Committee report; CAB testimony for the DHHS FY19 Budget Forum, and CAB testimony for the HHS Committee Worksession for B/C/C leadership.

FY18 Planning Session: Gwen led the Board members in a planning exercise that incorporated the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle and the Theory of Change (TOC) model. Gwen explained that the purpose of the TOC is to help CAA's develop a shared sense of purpose. The TOC includes three national goals for all CAA's. The purpose of the planning session was to look at the national goals and tie them to the Montgomery County CAB's work.

The key priorities identified by the Executive Committee at its planning session were advocacy, the Community Advocacy Institute, and Head Start. The Board members utilized the TOC model to determine the assumptions, strategies, outcomes, and how self-sufficiency will be obtained and communities revitalized with regard to these issues. **Please see attachment.*

Executive Director's Report: Board members received a written report in their packets. Sharon reported that the Community Services Aids and NON Connector positions at TESS were both filled. The number of Amharic-speaking clients has increased since the new CSA, who speaks Amharic fluently, was hired.

Head Start Report: Sharon reported that the Head Start monitoring visit would likely take place in December or January. The agency will receive 45 – 60 days notice prior to the visit. Board participation in the review will be required. Charlene will prepare the Board members with information they will need for this process in advance.

Sharon reported that the Executive Committee reviewed and approved recommendations for MCPS to continue providing services to all 648 students through the five-year grant cycle. The request has been forwarded to Betty Lam to forward to DHHS Director Uma Ahluwalia.

The annual CAA Contractors Meeting is December 11 from 2 – 4 pm at Bohrer Park. All Board members are invited to attend the meeting, which provides an excellent opportunity to learn more about the agency's nonprofit partners.

CAB Updates: Mary reported that she, Laurie-Anne, and Leah recently met with staff from the City of Gaithersburg to discuss a few potential areas for collaboration. First, the City hosted a Bloomberg Philanthropies Idea Accelerator Workshop to come up with possible ideas to apply for the Bloomberg Mayor's Challenge. Although the City is no longer planning to pursue the Challenge, they want to use some of the ideas that came out of the workshop regarding reaching the community members more effectively. They have developed a list of community influences and want to gather these stakeholders for a formal session. The City is looking for someone to facilitate the session. Since CAB previously hosted poverty forums with Board members serving as the facilitators, they reached out to CAB to see if anyone might be available to facilitate this session. It was explained that CAB focuses on the needs of low-income residents. Since this is not a program focused on the low-income community, it would not be a CAB initiative. However, Board members are welcome to volunteer with the project as a non-CAB activity.

The second Gaithersburg initiative is connected to the City's Community Needs Assessment. The City would like to conduct a survey of residents receiving gifts during the Holiday Giving program. The survey would assess community needs and how residents receive information. The City would like CAB members' help in developing the survey and administering the survey. The Board discussed this initiative but determined that it did not have the resources to commit to another project. It was recommended that the City contact non-profit partners with Spanish language capabilities. Mike moved to not participate in the initiative. Lisa seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Gail provided an update from the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. Gail recently informed the Board of the concerns raised by participants in the CAI regarding the limited affordable recreational services for youth in UpCounty. Representatives from the Department of Recreation have offered to do a focus group with CAI participants during one of the workshops to gather more information and ideas.

Pam reported that the Executive Committee voted to move up its meeting start time to 4 pm. Meetings will remain on the second Tuesday of the month.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Local Community Action Theory of Change
CAB Exercise – October 24, 2017

ADVOCACY

Assumptions:

- Advocacy for increasing the minimum wage helps people move towards self-sufficiency

Strategies:

- Testimony
- Letter-writing
- Promoting the Self-Sufficiency Standard
- Providing workshops
- Spreading facts through the media
- Talking to community members who are open to the issue
- Coalition-building
- Making sure the Board engages the people impacted by this issue (speaking with people we're hoping to serve)
- Can be measured by how much the rate increases

Outcomes:

- Legislation passes to increase minimum wage

Self-Sufficiency/Revitalized Communities – Connect outcomes to the long-term goals to be achieved:

- Families/ individuals achieve self-sufficiency that results in economic opportunity

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Assumptions:

- The CAI helps people learn how to raise their voices – empowers more people
- When participants advocate it will be for issues they care about
- The CAI expands networks for the participants and increases their understanding of the legislative process

Strategies:

- Providing guidance on how the system works
- Providing educational instruction, workshops, opportunities to practice testimony and gain firsthand experience
- Share best practices with participants
- Tracking what the participants care about helps CAB verify that it is doing the right thing – this keeps a “finger on the pulse of the community” for purposes of the Community Needs Assessment

Outcomes:

- Participants mobilize/speak-up about important issues
- Participants increase their skills
- Participants go back to their own communities to lead
- The number of people participating in advocacy in the County increases
- Participants join Boards, Committees, and Commissions and other decision-making bodies

Self-Sufficiency/Revitalized Communities – Connect outcomes to the long-term goals to be achieved:

- Communities will not need to rely on others to advocate for them – providing a means to self-sufficiency
- A reduction of the barriers towards self sufficiency
- Low income communities will be part of the decision-making process

HEAD START

Assumptions:

- Program promotes future self-sufficiency
- Wrap-around services promote family self-sufficiency
- Program gets parents involved in the community

Strategies:

- Providing oversight and collaboration with the Head Start Parents Policy Council
- Promoting the program
- Advocating for resources
- Influencing policy-makers/ building support for expansion of Head Start/early care and education

Outcomes:

- Expansion of the program to move low income families towards self- sufficiency:
 - More children enrolled
 - More full-day classes
 - More classes serving 3-year-olds

Self-Sufficiency/Revitalized Communities – Connect outcomes to the long-term goals to be achieved

- Head Start families will move towards self-sufficiency:
 - Full-day classes and three-year-old classes that allow families opportunities to work outside the home increasing self-sufficiency
 - Participating in Head Start results in more opportunities to receive services – helping to move families to self-sufficiency

Data

Gwen also discussed how the Board's work needs to be informed by data. Data must be selected carefully. The agency must be able to show the influence of the outcomes measures.

Key questions are:

1. How are we measuring the impact?
2. What changes do we see/document?

Other Priorities

Gwen noted that other priorities identified at the EC retreat included:

- Organizing forums
- Conducting focus groups
- Education of policy-makers
- Being a “convener”